

In the claims:

Please amend Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 15, 23, 24, 28 and Claim 35 as follows:

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1. (Amended) An apparatus for combining light comprises: at least two laser light sources, each of which defining a light beam wherein the light from the laser light sources has approximately the same wavelength; and that at least one beam combining unit which combines the light beams largely lossless, wherein the combination of the light beams is accomplished with reference to at least one characteristic property of the light beams.

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3. (Amended) The apparatus as defined in Claim 2, characterized in that a polarization beam splitter, a Glan-Thompson prism, is provided as the beam combining unit.

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5. (Amended) The apparatus as defined in Claim 4, characterized in that the polarization direction of the light from one of the laser light sources is so, that it is deflected by the polarization beam splitter; and that the polarization direction of the light from the other of the laser light sources is set so that it passes through the polarization beam splitter.

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7. (Amended) The apparatus as defined in Claim 6, characterized in that the polarization direction of the light from the first laser light source is set so that it passes through the polarization beam splitter and the polarization direction of the second laser light source is set so that after passing through the Faraday rotator arranged after the polarization beam splitter, the polarization direction of the second laser light source is at least largely parallel to the polarization direction of the light from the first laser light source.

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9. (Amended) The apparatus as defined in Claim 8, characterized in that the polarization direction of the light from one of the laser light sources is set so that it is coupled from the non-continuous fiber of the fiber V-coupler into the continuous fiber; and that the polarization direction of the light from the other of the laser light sources is set so that it remains in the continuous fiber of the fiber Y-coupler.

11. (Amended) The apparatus as defined in Claim 10, characterized in that the polarization direction of the light from the first laser light source is set so that it largely conforms to that of an extraordinary beam of the beam combining unit; and that the polarization direction of the light from the second laser light source is set so that it largely conforms to that of an ordinary beam of the beam combining unit.

15. (Amended) The apparatus as defined in Claim 12, characterized in that the individual light pulses are deflected, by a corresponding activation of an AOD or EOD, in the direction of a coaxially proceeding light beam.

23. (Amended) The apparatus as defined in Claim 20, characterized in that the polarization direction of a third laser light source is set so that it is at least parallel to the polarization direction of the combined light from the first two laser light sources after passing through a second Faraday rotator located after a second polarization beam splitter.

24. (Amended) An apparatus for combining light comprises: a first light source, means for dividing the light from the first light source into plurality of partial beams, a plurality of laser light sources wherein the light of each partial beam is coupled into the laser light sources wherein the light from the laser light sources has approximately the same wavelength; and a plurality of beam combining means which combine the light emitted from the laser light sources largely lossless, wherein the combination of the light is accomplished with reference to a characteristic property of the light.

28. (Amended) The apparatus as defined in Claim 27, characterized in that the optical diode is embodied as a Faraday rotator, as a Faraday rotator in conjunction with a Glan-Thompson prism, as an acousto-optical modulator (AOM) or as an optical circulator

35. (Amended) The confocal scanning microscope as defined in Claim 30, characterized in that a fiber Y-coupler is provided as the beam combining unit, and the Y-coupler has a non-continuous fiber and a continuous fiber.